

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny Hoyer announced today that the House of Representatives passed a bill which approved major funds to improve Southern Maryland's transportation infrastructure. The funds were included in the Transportation Reauthorization bill which authorizes federal funding for transportation projects over the next six years.

Three projects were funded at the request of Congressman Hoyer that will benefit Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties, including the Hughesville bypass project; construction of an interchange connecting MD 5, MD 373, and Brandywine Road; and widening a portion Chancellor's Run Road (MD 237).

The Senate passed the Transportation Reauthorization bill in February and the differences in the two bills must be worked out in a Conference Committee before the bill may become law.

"The Highway Bill passed in the House of Representatives today will deliver significant funds to make our roads safer by reducing congestion, making improvements to some of our region's most dangerous intersections, and ensuring that our roads can handle higher volumes of traffic," said Congressman Hoyer.

"A top transportation priority in our region has long been construction of the Hughesville bypass to alleviate congestion at the hazardous and accident-prone intersection of Route 5 and 231," Rep. Hoyer added. "I am thrilled that I was able to secure \$10 million for this important project to facilitate its expedited completion."

"Additionally, the Transportation Reauthorization bill includes funds to improve Chancellor's Run Road and the Brandywine Interchange, making critical improvements to both to improve the safety of the roadways and ensure that they will be able to support higher volumes of traffic.

"In October of last year, a national study was released that reported that in comparison to other major American cities, the Washington region is doing poorly and the problem is getting worse - our traffic patterns are some of the most congested in the entire nation. It is clear that we must address this problem, and I believe the nearly \$30 million secured in this bill for high-priority transportation projects in our region will address some of Southern Maryland's major transportation infrastructure needs and make it easier to travel through our state," concluded Hoyer.

Congressman Hoyer secured funding for the following projects that will benefit Southern Maryland:

Constructing the Hughesville Bypass along MD 5 (Leonardtown Road), \$10 million

One of the effects of rapid population growth, like that Southern Maryland has experienced in the past decade, is traffic congestion. This dramatic increase in population and the expansion of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station has resulted in transportation challenges.

The \$10 million authorized for the Hughesville Bypass will jumpstart construction of the bypass and will ultimately provide a third of the funding needed to complete this project which has long been considered Southern Maryland's top transportation priority.

"Federal funding for the Hughesville Bypass helps us to complete the final piece of the overall funding commitment from the State to accommodate the BRAC moves to Pax River during the 1990s, which Congressman Hoyer has been involved with for many years," said Delegate John Bohanan. "We thank him for helping the State to fulfill this commitment."

This project will create a new four-lane, divided highway from the end of the divided highway south of Hughesville to the end of the divided highway north of Hughesville. The project's design is nearly complete and predicts that construction could begin by the end of this fiscal year.

Chancellor's Run Road, MD 237, \$10 million

As it exists, Chancellor's Run Road is a narrow two lane roadway with minimal shoulders and dangerous sharp curves. This roadway experiences tremendous periods of congestion and without improvements would be incapable of handling projected peak hour traffic volume resulting from residential and commercial growth in the Lexington Park region.

An improved MD 237 will serve the current needs and future expansion at Patuxent River Naval Air Station and would support associated growth in Southern Maryland. The project has been

strongly supported by St. Mary's County elected officials and the Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

"I am grateful for the work that Congressman Hoyer has done to ensure that these funds were included in the Highway bill and was pleased to work with him to call attention to the serious traffic problems on Chancellor's Run Road (Rt. 237)," said Delegate John Bohanan. "These federal funds are a great boost to our region so that this project is bumped up on the State's priority list where it was competing against hundreds of other requests that likely cannot be funded for many years. This is great news for addressing traffic movement for both Pax and St. Inigoes on a daily basis."

This funding will provide nearly a third of the funding necessary to complete this project to upgrade and widen Chancellor's Run Road from Pegg Road to MD 235. The design of this project is underway and predicts that construction could begin in fiscal year 2006.

New Interchange Connecting Branch Avenue (MD 5), MD 373, and Brandywine Road, \$10 million

Severe traffic congestion during peak hours at this intersection affects drivers in Southern Prince George's County, Southern Maryland and commuters from Washington, DC. And, traffic volume is only expected to rise as the area grows.

This funding will provide half of the funds necessary for the design and construction of an interchange connecting Branch Avenue (MD 5), MD 373, and Brandywine Road and the widening of Branch Avenue between Moore's Road and US 301. It will improve the safety of this dangerous intersection and will help to reduce traffic congestion in the entire region.

Federal funding will ensure that this project occurs since it has been on hold awaiting additional funding, and only thirty percent of the design has been completed. The design is expected to take two years to complete and the construction is expected to take three years.

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